

Stuart Finkelstein  
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## Installation

Our congregation has been through an historic transition. Over the last several year's, members of the Adas Yoshuron community embarked on a journey that, at last, has brought Rabbi Lily Solochek to us as our rabbi and spiritual leader. In just the past few months, we have been graced with Rabbi's unique blend of wisdom, humor, vision and humanity. Rabbi has demonstrated that they can teach us, move us and inspire us. We all look forward to writing with them this new chapter in the story of Adas Yoshuron.

Rabbis perform critical leadership functions in congregations. Rabbis shape and communicate vision, lead prayer, teach, and offer pastoral care. They build community and connect individuals and groups to one another. Rabbis are critical in building a synagogue's vitality. Vital congregations are unusually active, inspiring, engaging and stimulate feelings of belonging – features that help members grow and learn as Jews. Vital congregations perform critical functions – for their members, Jewish life, their local communities, and the world.

But there are other important responsibilities of being a rabbi. Elizabeth Seigel, our Hebrew School teacher came across the original contract for the rabbi our synagogue hired in 1921. Here are some interesting rabbinical tasks outlined in that document:

- Teach Hebrew to children every day for 2 hours, rain or shine, no matter how busy you are, for which you would receive \$1.00 per child.

- You would receive \$125.00 a year (paid annually on the day before Yom Kippur) for your services as rabbi on holidays, one Saturday Shabbat each month, blowing the Shofar and “reading the Bible when we have to.”
- However, the bulk of the agreement did not focus on spiritual duties, but rather centered on rabbi’s responsibility for slaughtering the congregant’s chickens at 10 cents a piece. But it was not a straightforward set of protocols.... There were directions for wholesale prices, retail prices, the price of the good meat, the price of the cheap meat and of course, being forbidden to kill any chickens until a congregant’s membership dues were paid.

I know you already signed your contract rabbi. I just hope you read over it very carefully.

Today, we look around and realize that we are a very lucky congregation. We have chosen as our rabbi a person who is not only smart, learned, hard working, a lover of Jewish tradition and someone who has committed their life to its future, but a person of integrity, compassion, extraordinary sensitivity and empathy. We know that you will perform inspiring services, share thoughtful teachings and create unique programs. But, being our rabbi, we trust that foremost, you will have the health and well-being of our community as your primary focus.

Before I have the honor and privilege of offering the Blessing of Installation, I want to remind us all that blessings are, ultimately, not words that we recite, but something we become and which we share by how we walk through the world.

## **Blessing of Installation**

*May the one who blessed our ancestors Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, bless and sustain Rabbi Lily Solochek.*

*Grant them wisdom and compassion in equal measure to teach and comfort those in need. Give them strength to continue work in difficult times and generosity to share abundance when life is full.*

*May they be blessed with a welcoming and supportive congregation and community.*

*May Rabbi Solochek help Adas Yoshuron continue to be a home for celebration and exploration of Jewish learning, spirituality, and community.*

*May Torah and tradition continue to be a source of joy for them, and may they be blessed with insight and inspiration as they contribute to Jewish learning and practice.*

*May words of wisdom come from their lips and compassion fill their heart as we move together from strength to strength.*

*We welcome you as our rabbi. Amen.*